

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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TAGS: PFOR MASS YO US

SUBJ: YUGOSLAV INTEREST IN ANTI-TANK WEAPONS

1. TWO RECENT ITEMS IN THE PRESS HAVE HIGHLIGHTED YUGOSLAV INTEREST IN ACQUIRING MODERN ANTI-TANK WEAPONS. THEY ARE PORTRAYED AS KEY TO COST-EFFECTIVE AND SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE OF COUNTRY.

2. SENIOR GENERALS, IN AN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN THE NEWS MAGAZINE NIN ON DECEMBER 21, SAID THAT THEY BELIEVE A POTENTIAL AGGRESSOR MUST CALCULATE ON A SURPRISE ATTACK "WITH LARGE TANK AND STRONG PARACHUTE FORCES". "HE WOULD HAVE TO STRIVE FOR A VERY QUICK SOLUTION, TO QUICKLY SEIZE SOME TERRITORY ON WHICH TO INSTALL A QUISLING GOVERNMENT, WHICH WOULD THEN SEEK (FOREIGN) ASSISTANCE, ETC." THE GENERALS SAID THEY ASSUMED THAT "WE MUST DESTROY AT LEAST TWO THOUSAND ENEMY TANKS". ARTICLE GOES ON TO DISCUSS COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF ANTI-TANK MISSILES.

3. "BORBAZ MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMENTATOR SESERINAC DEVOTED HIS COLUMN TO A DISCUSSION OF TANK WARFARE ON JANUARY 9. AFTER NOTING THE ENORMOUS INFLUENCE OF TANKS

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ON THE SECOND WORLD WAR, HE STRESSED THAT MODERN ANTI-

TANK WEAPONS, INCLUDING ROCKETS, ARE SO EFFECTIVE AND RELATIVELY INEXPENSIVE AS TO HAVE SHIFTED THE ADVANTAGE FROM THE OFFENSE TO THE DEFENSE. "QUALITATIVELY NEW AND MASSIVE ANTI-TANK RESOURCES HAVE ELIMINATED THE AUTOMATIC SUPERIORITY OF ANY AGGRESSIVE FORCES WHICH MIGHT BASE THEIR ATTACK ON THE MASSIVE USE OF ARMORED UNITS."

4. COMMENT: CLEAR THAT THE MISSILES AND ROCKETS DISCUSSED IN THESE ARTICLES ARE TOW TYPE, WHICH YUGOSLAVS SEE AS VITAL TO DEFENSE AGAINST OBVIOUS THREAT OF SOVIET TANKS.

SILBERMAN

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